

**Application No.: 10/506,361**  
**Filing Date: May 16, 2005**

**AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS**

Please replace Figures 2 and 3 of Sheet 2 with Figures 2 and 3 of the attached Replacement Sheet. These figures have been amended to remove blackened areas. The amendment to the drawings introduces no new matter.

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### **REMARKS**

Claims 1, 3-5, and 7-9 stand rejected. By this paper, Claim 1 has been amended. No new matter has been added by the amendments. Claim 2 was previously canceled. Claims 5 and 6 are hereby canceled without prejudice to, or disclaimer of, the subject matter contained therein. Applicant maintains that the cancellation of a claim makes no admission as to its patentability and reserve the right to pursue the subject matter of the canceled claims in this or any other patent application. Thus, Claims 1, 3, 4, and 7-9 are presented for consideration and further examination in view of the following amendments and remarks. Applicant respectfully requests entry of the amendments and remarks.

#### **Information Disclosure Statement**

In the Office Action, the Examiner indicated that citation nos. 34 and 35 listed in the Information Disclosure Statement filed April 16, 2008 were not considered because the citations referred to as yet unpublished documents. Applicant notes that citation no. 34 (U.S. Application No. 11/632,329) has since published on September 18, 2008 as U.S. Publication No. 20080223486. Applicant also submits herewith a courtesy copy of WO 2006/125566 (PCT Application No. PCT/EP2006/004757, published in German with an English abstract), to which citation no. 35 (U.S. Application No. 11/915,260) claims priority.

#### **Objections to the Drawings**

In the Office Action, the Examiner objected to the drawings under 37 C.F.R. 1.84(m) for including areas of solid black. Applicant has provided replacement sheets for the drawings with the areas of solid black removed. The amendments to the drawings add no new matter.

The drawings have also been objected to under 37 C.F.R. 1.83(a) for not showing an "annular groove... formed in a shoulder between the sliding sleeve and a spacer sleeve," as recited in Claim 6. Applicant has canceled Claim 6 and amended Claim 1 to substantially incorporate the features recited in Claim 6, including clarifying that "an annular groove [is] formed between a shoulder of the sliding sleeve and the spacer sleeve." Applicant respectfully submits that this feature is illustrated in Figure 2. Thus, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the objections to the drawings.

Claim Objections

Claim 6 has been objected to for reciting “a spacer sleeve” instead of “the spacer sleeve.” Claim 6 has also been objected to as lacking clarity. In particular, the Examiner states that the recitation of an “annular groove... formed in a shoulder between the sliding sleeve and a spacer sleeve” is either inaccurate or misdescriptive. Applicant has canceled Claim 6.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the Examiner’s indication that Claim 6 would be allowable if amended to overcome the clarity objection and to substantially include all of the limitations of its base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant has amended Claim 1 to substantially incorporate the features of Claim 6 and of Claim 5, from which Claim 6 depends. Claim 1 now recites, among other features, “an annular groove formed between a shoulder of the sliding sleeve and the spacer sleeve and arranged radially outside of the guide sleeve, the groove being configured to receive at least a portion of the outer ends of the collet chucks at least when the collet chucks are in an uncoupled position.” In doing so, Applicant has clarified the objected-to language from Claim 6. The inclusion of the phrase “uncoupled position” is supported in at least paragraph [0018] of the specification. Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that Claim 1 is in condition for allowance.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and §103(a)

The Examiner rejected Claims 1, 3-5, 8, and 9 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,630,570 (Lacroix). The Examiner also rejected dependent Claim 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lacroix in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,202,383 (Reiter). Applicant has amended Claim 1 to recite, for example, “an annular groove formed between a shoulder of the sliding sleeve and the spacer sleeve and arranged radially outside of the guide sleeve, the groove being configured to receive at least a portion of the outer ends of the collet chucks at least when the collet chucks are in an uncoupled position.” The recited structure is similar to the structure recited in Claim 6 which had been identified as being

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allowable. Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that the rejection of independent Claim 1 has been overcome.

Claims 3, 4, and 7-9 depend directly or indirectly from Claim 1 and, thus, are patentable for at least the same reasons that Claim 1 is patentable over the applied art. Therefore, allowance of Claims 1, 3, 4, and 7-9 is respectfully requested.

#### No Disclaimers or Disavowals

Although the present communication may include alterations to the application or claims, or characterizations of claim scope or referenced art, Applicant is not conceding in this application that previously pending claims are not patentable over the cited references. Rather, any alterations or characterizations are being made to facilitate expeditious prosecution of this application. Applicant reserves the right to pursue at a later date any previously pending or other broader or narrower claims that capture any subject matter supported by the present disclosure, including subject matter found to be specifically disclaimed herein or by any prior prosecution. Accordingly, reviewers of this or any parent, child or related prosecution history shall not reasonably infer that Applicant has made any disclaimers or disavowals of any subject matter supported by the present application.

#### CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the rejections set forth in the outstanding Office Action are inapplicable to the present claims. Accordingly, early issuance of a Notice of Allowance is most earnestly solicited.

Any remarks in support of patentability of one claim should not be imputed to any other claim in this or a related application, even if similar terminology is used. Any remarks referring to only a portion of a claim should not be understood to base patentability on solely that portion; rather, patentability must rest on each claim taken as a whole. Applicant has not presented arguments concerning whether the applied references can be properly combined in view of the clearly missing elements noted above, and Applicant reserves the right to later contest whether a proper reason exists to combine these references.

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Applicant respectfully traverses each of the Examiner's rejections and each of the Examiner's assertions regarding what the prior art discloses or teaches, even if not expressly discussed herein. Although changes to the claims have been made, no acquiescence or estoppel is or should be implied thereby; such amendments are made only to expedite prosecution of the present application and are without prejudice to the presentation or assertion, in the future, of claims relating to the same or similar subject matter.

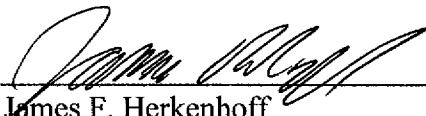
The undersigned has made a good faith effort to respond to all of the noted rejections and to place the claims in condition for immediate allowance. Nevertheless, if any undeveloped issues remain or if an issue requires clarification, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call Applicant's attorney in order to resolve any such issue promptly.

Please charge any additional fees, including any fees for additional extension of time, or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-1410.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: 9/29/08

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